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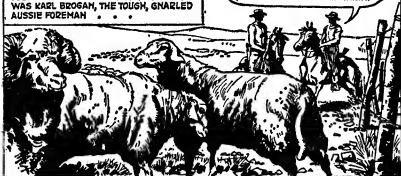
**F**OR SEVEN DAYS IN MAY, 1940, CRETE WAS A BATTLE INFERNO. THE GERMANS HAD LANDED IN FULL FORCE, QUICKLY BRINGING THE BRITISH AND ANZAC DEFENDERS TO THEIR KNEES. BUT IN THAT SAVAGE CONFLICT TWO MEN CAME TO FORGET OLD ENMITIES AND TO STAND, SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER, AGAINST THE COMMON FOE.

## Chapter 1. *The Smouldering Hate*

FRESH FROM A COAL-MINING VILLAGE IN ENGLAND, DAVE GARNETT WAS WORKING AS A LINE-RIDER ON A VAST SHEEP STATION IN THE AUSTRALIAN

OUT-BACK. THERE WAS MUCH THAT WAS UNFAMILIAR AND TRYING TO THE ENGLISHMAN. HEAT, DUST, LONELINESS, THE SILENCE THAT GOES WITH IMMENSE SPACE . . . AND THERE WAS KARL BROGAN, THE TOUGH, GNARLED AUSSIE FOREMAN . . .

REMEMBER THIS, POMMIE. I DIDN'T TAKE YOU ON. THE BOSS DID! THAT, ME, I WOULDN'T GIVE A POMMIE! A JOB FOR ALL THE TEA IN CHINA!



CONTEMPTUOUSLY BROGAN SPAT OUT THE NICKNAME EVERY AUSTRALIAN-BORN NATIVE USED FOR THE ENGLISH IMMIGRANT.

WHAT HAVE YOU GOT AGAINST ME, BROGAN? I'VE A RIGHT TO KNOW.

YOU'RE A POMMIE! YOU LOT WANT BIG MONEY WITHOUT THE WORK! YOU DON'T SPEAK LIKE US! YOU'RE ALWAYS WHINING ABOUT THE OLD COUNTRY!



GARNETT FELT THE ANGER SURGE UP INSIDE HIM BUT HE CONTROLLED IT WITH AN EFFORT.



THE TWO MEN STARED AT EACH OTHER, AWARE ONLY OF THE TIDE OF DISLIKE AND SUSPICION THAT RAN BETWEEN THEM.



THE FOREMAN RELAXED HIS GRIP SLOWLY AND HIS LIPS LIFTED IN A THIN SMILE.



GARNETT KNEW THE AUSTRALIAN HAD SET OUT TO RILE HIM INTO A FIGHT.

THAT'S WHAT YOU WANTED, BROGAN, AND NOW YOU'RE SATISFIED. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE? WHICHEVER WAY IT GOES, I LOSE MY JOB!



NEXT DAY GARNETT RODE INTO THE STATION HOUSE TO CLEAN UP AND COLLECT HIS PAY, AS HE CAME OUT . . .

YOU WANT TO BACK OUT, POMMIE? YOU'VE STILL GOT TIME. THE BOYS WILL UNDERSTAND. I'VE LICKED EVERY ONE OF 'EM ONE TIME OR ANOTHER!

HERE'S ONE YOU HAVEN'T LICKED. I'M READY WHEN YOU ARE.



THE LITTLE TOWNSHIP OF MARBLE SPRINGS SHIMMERED IN THE HEAT HAZE WHEN THE SHEEP STATION CREW RODE IN TO CELEBRATE THEIR MONTHLY PAY-DRAW.



STRIPPED OFF, BROGAN WAS BUILT LIKE A BEAR, WITH HITTING POWER WELDED INTO THE BULGING MUSCLES OF HIS ARMS AND SHOULDERS.



GARNETT WAS LEANER BUILT, BUT TOUGH, MAULING LABOUR AT THE COAL FACE HAD TUNED HIS BODY TO WHIPLASH ENDURANCE.

DON'T LET HIM RUSH YOU, COBBER. JAB HIM OFF AND USE YOUR FEET TO GET AROUND, AND WATCH THAT RIGHT HOOK OF HIS. IT'S A REAL BEAUT.

THANKS, DINGO.

BROGAN CAME IN ON HIS TOES, MOVING WITH SURPRISING SPEED, CHOPPING AT THE ENGLISHMAN WITH SHORT CLUBBING BLOWS...



BROGAN KNOWS HOW TO USE HIS DUKES. WATCH THAT, RIGHT OF HIS!

FLASHY STUFF, SID. WAIT TILL HE GETS ONE REALLY HOME.



SUDDENLY BROGAN SHIFTED HIS FEET THEN MURLED A SLEDGEHAMMER RIGHT THAT TOOK THE ENGLISHMAN HIGH ON THE TEMPLE. SOMETHING SEEMED TO EXPLODE IN GARNETT'S BRAIN.

TAKE HIM, KARL! I'M LAYING TEN TO ONE THE POMMIE GOES DOWN! TEN TO ONE!



BLOCKING, PARRYING, DUCKING . . . BY SHEER INSTINCT, GARNETT HELD OFF THE AUSTRALIAN WHILE HIS HEAD CLEARED AND THE ROARING IN HIS EARS SUBSIDED.

COME ON, POMMIE. MAKE A FIGHT OF IT. THIS AIN'T AN EIGHT-DAY BICYCLE RACE. YOU SCARED OR SOMETHING?



FOR TEN MINUTES UNDER THE SEARING SUN GARNETT EVADED BROGAN'S RUSHES OR PULLED HIM UP WITH STRAIGHT-ARM JABS. THEN GRADUALLY THE PATTERN CHANGED. BROGAN CLAWED HIS WAY INTO A CLINCH.

NEXT TIME I FIGHT A POMMIE REMIND ME TO BRING MY RUNNING PUMPS. YOU'RE NO FIGHTER, GARNETT!

I'M STILL ON MY FEET, COBBER. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?



THE TURNING-POINT CAME WHEN BROGAN, FACE SLASHED AND SWOLLEN FROM THE ENGLISHMAN'S RIPPING COUNTER-PUNCHES, LOOSED A DESPAIRING SWING. GARNETT DUCKED AND DROVE IN A SHORT, POWER-PACKED RIGHT TO THE BODY,



AS BROGAN DROPPED HIS GUARD, GARNETT STEPPED INSIDE AND RIPPED IN A FLURRY OF COMBINATION PUNCHES TO HEAD AND HEART. SLOWLY, THE ROCK-LIKE AUSTRALIAN BEGAN TO CRUMPLE . . .



AS GARNETT PULLED HIS SHIRT OVER THE GREAT THROBBING BRUISE THAT WAS HIS BODY, BROGAN UNSTEADILY CLIMBED TO HIS FEET.



THEN GARNETT STOPPED IN BEWILDERMENT.



GARNETT SAW THE HATRED SMOULDERING IN BROGAN'S DEEP SET EYES AND HE KNEW THERE COULD NEVER BE ANY RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THEM. IT WAS THERE TO LAST!



SO GARNETT RETURNED TO THE LONELY DRUDGERY OF LINE-RIDING WHILE BROGAN BROODED SOMBERLY OVER DEFEAT TILL IT BEGAN TO WORK IN HIS BRAIN LIKE A POISON.

LICKED BY A  
PUP THAT'S STILL  
WET BEHIND THE EARS!  
I'LL NEVER HEAR THE  
LAST OF IT. I'VE GOT TO  
GET EVEN SOMEHOW  
OR I'M  
FINISHED!



FROM THAT DAY BROGAN SET OUT TO HAZE THE ENGLISHMAN IN EVERY WAY HIS INGENUITY COULD DEVISE.

THAT HORSE IS  
EDGY. MOUTH'S SORE  
TOO. YOU'RE ROUGH  
WITH ANIMALS,  
POMMIE.

I KNOW HOW TO  
TREAT A HORSE, BROGAN.  
YOU ONLY CAME HERE TO  
PICK FAULTS!



GARNETT'S PATIENCE WAS WEARING THIN, BUT HE ENDURED IT RATHER THAN GIVE BROGAN THE EXCUSE HE NEEDED.

LOOK AT THE SAG IN THAT WIRE. WHAT DO YOU DO ALL DAY ... SLEEP?

I'VE BEEN IN THE SADDLE FOR NINE HOURS. THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT WIRE AND YOU KNOW IT. WHY DON'T YOU LAY OFF ME, BROGAN?



TWO DAYS LATER, JUST BEFORE DAWN, GARNETT AWOKE TO HEAR THE FRENZIED BLEATING OF HARRIED SHEEP. HE ROLLED OUT OF HIS BLANKET.



THE SKULKING WILD DOGS, SCOURGE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SHEEPMAN, FLITTED LIKE TAWNY GHOSTS THROUGH THE WIRE, LEAVING DEAD AND MAIMED SHEEP BEHIND THEM.



BROGAN RODE UP. HE WAS SMILING AS A MAN DOES WHEN HE SCENTS VICTORY.

FIVE SHEEP  
MAULED TO DEATH,  
HUH? SO YOU LET  
THEM DINGOES GO  
TO WORK WHILE  
YOU SNORED YOUR  
HEAD OFF!

NO, BROGAN,  
I WAS AWAKE, I THINK  
I GOT TWO OF THEM.  
YOU'LL FIND THEM THE  
OTHER SIDE OF  
THE WIRE.



BROGAN HAD FOUND THE EXCUSE HE HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR. HE HAD GOT RID OF THE MAN HE HATED WITHOUT LOSING FACE.

GARNETT,  
YOU'RE FIRED!  
MAKE UP YOUR HORSE  
AND GET BACK TO THE  
STATION. I'LL SEND UP  
A **REAL** LINE-RIDER  
TO TAKE OVER.

THAT'S WHAT YOU  
WANTED, BROGAN. YOU  
TRIED HARD ENOUGH...  
I'LL SAY THAT  
FOR YOU!



IT WAS THEIR LAST ENCOUNTER. OR SO THESE TWO MEN THOUGHT, MEN TO WHOM THE FUTURE WAS LIKE A SHROUDED WINDOW.



SO LONG, BROGAN.  
DON'T GET INTO ANY MORE  
FIGHTS YOU CAN'T  
FINISH!

AND DON'T  
EVER LET ME MEET  
YOU AGAIN, POMMIE.  
TAKE MY TIP. GO BACK  
TO ENGLAND TO THAT  
HOLE IN THE GROUND  
YOU USED TO WORK.  
IT SUITS YOU!

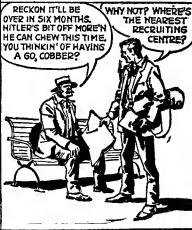
A WEEK LATER GARNETT ARRIVED IN MELBOURNE TO FIND THAT WORLD EVENTS HAD PASSED HIM BY.



I SEE THE BIG SHOW'S  
STARTED. OLD ADOLF'S  
PUT POLAND THROUGH  
THE MINCER. WE'RE  
ALL IN IT NOW.

LET'S  
SEE THAT  
PAPER,  
MATE.

GARNETT WAS FOOT-LOOSE AND FANCY-FREE. LIKE MANY ANOTHER AUSTRALIAN ON THAT FATEFUL DAY HE MADE A SNAP DECISION.



RECKON IT'LL BE  
OVER IN SIX MONTHS.  
HITLER'S BIT OFF MORE'N  
HE CAN CHEW THIS TIME.  
YOU THINKIN' OF HAVING  
A GO, COBBER?

WHY NOT? WHERE'S  
THE NEAREST  
RECRUITING  
CENTRE?

## Chapter 2. *The Desperate Men*

EIGHTEEN MONTHS HAD PASSED. IT WAS APRIL 1941. PRIVATE D. GARNETT OF THE 6TH. AUSTRALIAN DIVISION FOUND HIMSELF LANDING AT PIRAEUS IN GREECE.

LOOK AT THAT! JERRY'S BEEN HAVING A BIRTHDAY PARTY!

HERE, WHO SAID WE WAS 'WINNING THE BLOOMIN' WAR?

GARNETT WAS NOT BAW TO BATTLE. HE HAD SHARED THE NORTH AFRICAN VICTORIES UNDER WAVELL . . . JUST AS HE HAD SHARED THE BITTER RETREAT FROM ROMMEL'S ALL-CONQUERING ARMOUR.

WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT, DAVE?

SEEMS THE GREEKS ARE RESISTING JERRY AND WE PROMISED TO HELP. HALF OUR GEAR LIES ON THE SEA-BED... WE'RE SHORT OF 'PLANES... WE'VE GOT GUNS WITHOUT AMMO... AND AMMO WITHOUT GUNS! BUT WE PROMISED... SO HERE WE ARE, GUS!



SPRING CAME LATE THAT YEAR, AS THEY CROSSED THE FLAT THESSALONIAN PLAIN TOWARDS THE IMMORTAL THERMOPYLAE PASS, THE DRIVING RAIN LIFTED . . . AND THEY SAW THE BLACK VULTURE-SHAPES OF THE GERMAN STUKAS.



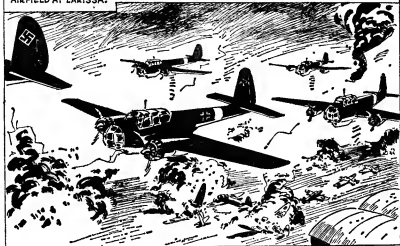
FRESH FROM THEIR LIGHTNING CONQUEST OF YUGOSLAVIA, THE GERMANS HAD MASSED THEIR ARMOUR AND AIRCRAFT TO POUND THE ALLIES INTO THE EARTH.



DAZED AND BATTERED BY INCESSANT BOMBING, THE SOLDIERS LOOKED YAINLY SKYWARD FOR THE ALLIED PLANES WHICH MIGHT HAVE SAVED THEM.



GARNETT WAS NEARER THE TRUTH THAN HE SUSPECTED. THAT MORNING THE GERMANS HAD MADE A DAWN ATTACK ON A FORCE OF BLENHEIMS AND HURRICANES ON AN ALLIED AIRFIELD AT LARISSA.



A STONY-FACED GROUP OF SENIOR AIR OFFICIALS STUDIED THE SMOKING RUINS.

BAD SHOW, SIR. SIXTEEN BLENHEIMS AND FOURTEEN HURRICANES WRITTEN OFF. WE CAN PATCH UP THE OTHERS.

I WANT EVERY SERVICEABLE UNIT MOVED BACK TO ATHENS AT ONCE. WE MAY NEED THOSE AIRCRAFT DESPERATELY!



MEANWHILE, THE ANZACS TOOK EVERYTHING THE STUKAS COULD HAND OUT. . . . AND GAVE A LITTLE IN RETURN.

GOT YOU! YOU BIG BLACK NAZI BUZZARD! GOT YOU!



THEN, MERCIFULLY, THE RAINCLOUDS CLOSED IN AGAIN AND THE STUKAS HOMED BACK TO THEIR BASE BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, LEAVING A TRAIL OF DEATH AND HAVOC.

MEDICAL SUPPLIES! WHERE THE BLAZES ARE THEY? COME ON, MAKE IT SNAPPY!

NO LUCK, SARGE. THEY WENT UP IN FLAMES. WE'VE NOTHING LEFT!



RED-EYED FROM LACK OF SLEEP AND BOMB-DRUNK, THE SURVIVORS FOUGHT DOGGEDLY THROUGH TO THE PASS AND DUG IN FOR THE INEVITABLE ATTACK.



EARLY NEXT MORNING, THE GERMAN PANZERS ENTERED THE PASS, THE SNARL OF THEIR EXHAUSTS ECHOED THUNDEROUSLY FROM THE MOUNTAIN SIDE.



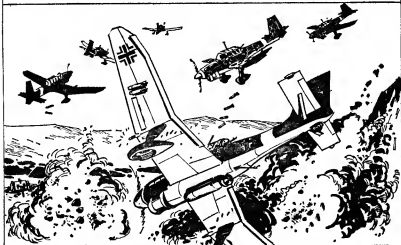
ON THE ANZAC FLANK THE GREEKS WAITED FOR THE GERMAN TANKS. THEIR LIGHT WEAPONS WERE USELESS SO THEY USED THEIR BARE HANDS AND MUSCLES . . .



THE TANK COLUMN HALTED. A MAN STEPPED DOWN FROM THE LEADING TANK AND HIS COLD BLUE EYES STUDIED THE MOUNTAIN SIDE. A BLOND, YOUNG MAN, STIFF WITH ARROGANCE.



THE STUKAS CAME BACK TO THE ATTACK, BEATING AND BLUDGEONING A MAN'S WILL TO RESIST, HAMMERING AT HIS NERVES WITH SCREAMING CRESCENDOES OF SOUND.



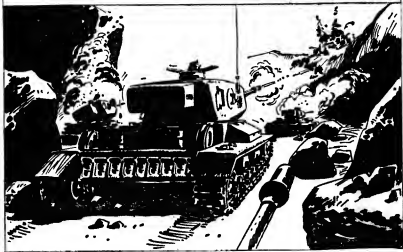
SLOWLY THE PANZERS CAME ON LIKE VAST, GREY-GREEN BEETLES . . . INTO THE RANGE OF THE ANZAC GUNS.



ONE OF THE TANKS WAS HIT AND GROUND TO A HALT. A GREAT GOUT OF FLAME BURST FROM ITS TURRET.



THE TANK GUNS CAME ROUND TO BEAR, PROBING FOR THE ANZAC GUN POSITIONS. IT DID NOT TAKE THEM LONG TO FIND THE RANGE.



IT WAS A BATTLE BETWEEN GERMANS CASED IN ARMOUR AND ANZACS PERCHED OPENLY ON A HILLSIDE . . . AND THE ANZACS OUTFIGHTED THEM!



SLOWLY THE PANZERS STARTED TO BACK AWAY.





GARNETT WAS A SHREWD PROPHET. THE STUKAS CAME BACK, ACCOMPANIED BY STRAFING ME 100'S WITH THEIR CHATTERING, SEARCHING CANNON. AND STILL THE ANZACS HELD ON!



FOR TWO DAYS AND NIGHTS THEY HUNG OUT ON THE MOUNTAIN SLOPE UNTIL AT LAST, SHORT OF AMMUNITION, THEIR LIMBS TWITCHING WITH FATIGUE, THEY RECEIVED FRESH ORDERS.

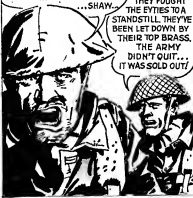
THE GREEK HIGH COMMAND HAVE QUIT. WE'RE PULLING OUT. STAND BY TO MOVE OUT AT DUSK. WE'RE COVERING THE RETREAT OF THE MAIN BODY.



THE TORTURED NERVES OF PRIVATE GUS MACKLIN CRIED OUT IN PROTEST AGAINST THE FUTILITY OF IT ALL.

THE PERISHING GREEKS! THEY DID THIS TO US! ALL OUR SQUADDIES GONE FOR NOTHING...HARRIS... BUTCHER ... SHAW...

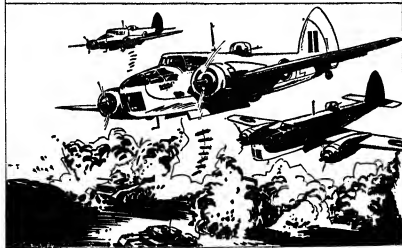
DON'T BLAME THE GREEKS, GUS. THEY FOUGHT THE EYTIAS TO A STANDSTILL. THEY'VE BEEN LET DOWN BY THEIR TOP BRASS. THE ARMY DIDN'T QUIT... IT WAS SOLD OUT!



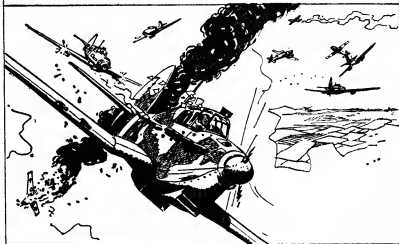
AND SO THEY RETRACED THE PATH OF BLOOD AND SWEAT ACROSS THE THESSALONIAN PLAIN, FIGHTING LIKE TIGERS TO COVER THE BATTERED REMNANTS OF 6TH. DIVISION.



INTO THE STRUGGLE, THE ALLIES FLUNG EVERYTHING THEY HAD TO STEM THE ADVANCING PANZERS.



OUTNUMBERED TEN TO ONE BY THE SWARMING LUFTWAFFE ME-109S, THE HURRICANES AND BLENHEIMS FOUGHT TO THE BITTER END.



AND NOW THE AMZAC 6TH. DIVISION WAITED ON THE BEACHES TO BE TAKEN OFF, ANGRY, DISILLUSIONED MEN WHO HID THEIR FEELINGS WITH BITTER JESTS . . .



GARNETT'S REARGUARD DETACHMENT REACHED THE BEACH THAT NIGHT. EARLY NEXT MORNING, A DESTROYER LANDED THEM AT SUDA BAY IN CRETE.



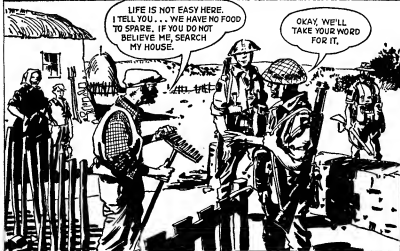
CRETE WAS A VAST CAMP OF FIFTY THOUSAND HUNGRY AND BATTLE-WEARY MEN.



DESPERATE MEN ARE OFTEN FORCED TO TAKE DESPERATE MEASURES.



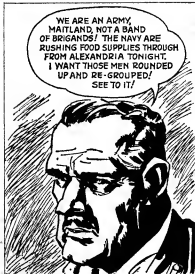
THE WINTERLAND OF THE ISLAND HAD BECOME A JUNGLE OF FAMISHED MARAUDERS.



BUT OTHER CRETANS WERE NOT SO LUCKY.



A CONFERENCE OF HIGH-RANKING OFFICERS HAD BEEN CALLED AT ALLIED H.Q. ON THE ISLAND.



## Chapter 3. *Massacre*

ORDERS WERE PASSED DOWN AND A SQUAD OF M.P.'S AND HARDBITTEN ANZAC N.C.O.'S WERE ASSIGNED TO THE JOB.

WHAT'S THE DOPE, BROGAN?

THE GENERAL'S SOUNDING OFF ABOUT SOME OF OUR BOYS. WE'RE GOING TO PICK THEM UP BEFORE CRETE DECLARES WAR ON US!



AND SO, AFTER EIGHTEEN MONTHS, GARNETT CAME FACE TO FACE WITH KARL BROGAN AGAIN . . .

ALL RIGHT, LADS, THE PARTY'S OVER. YOU'VE HAD YOUR FUN, NOW WE'RE TAKING YOU ... **GARNETT!**

**BROGAN!**



THE OLD HATRED FLARED UP ANEW IN BROGAN'S DEEPSET EYES. IT CAME OUT IN HIS SNARLING GRIN.



BROGAN IGNORED THE PEASANT.



GARNETT FELL BACK ON THE ONLY POSSIBLE DEFENCE AGAINST A BULLYING M.C.O. — THE MOCKING, GOADING SARCASM THAT DROVE BENEATH A MAN'S SKIN. BUT BROGAN WAS NOT TO BE DRAWN.

I GOT THEM FOR KEEPING MY NOSE CLEAN AND KNOWING HOW TO HANDLE MEN. I CAN HANDLE YOU, GARNETT. I'M GOING TO BREAK YOU!

NOT A CHANCE. I'M NOT IN YOUR MOB. YOU COULDN'T TOUCH ME WITH A LAWYER'S WRIT! YOU'RE LICKED, BROGAN!





BUT GARNETT WAS WRONG. TWO DAYS LATER, HIS COMPANY WERE MADE UP TO FULL STRENGTH ... **AND AMONG THE NEW N.C.O'S WAS BROGAN!**



AFTER THE PARADE BROGAN TOOK GARNETT TO ONE SIDE.



FROM THEN ON GARNETT WAS A MARKED MAN . . .



GARNETT KNEW THAT BROGAN WAS OUT TO BREAK HIM . . . OR DRIVE HIM BEYOND THE EDGE OF DISCRETION TO OPEN REBELLION!



THAT WAS THE BEGINNING. FOR A WEEK BROGAN HOUNDED AND HAZED THE ENGLISHMAN WITH AN IMPLACABLE THOROUGHNESS . . .



GARNETT WAS TOO PROUD TO COMPLAIN TO HIS REGIMENTAL OFFICERS . . . AND BROGAN KNEW THAT, TOO.



MEANWHILE, THE GERMAN HIGH COMMAND IN GREECE PUT THE FINAL POLISH ON THEIR PLANNED INVASION OF CRETE.



THE 1ST. ASSAULT REGIMENT WERE GLIDER-BORNE STORM-TROOPERS, THE ELITE OF THE GERMAN ARMY. PICKED MEN, FANATICALLY BRAVE AND DEVOTED. THE-BLONDE YOUNG MEN OF THE THIRD REICH



THESE WERE BACKED BY THE 7TH. PARACHUTE AND 5TH. MOUNTAIN DIVISIONS, TOUGH VETERANS AND FORMIDABLE FIGHTERS. ON THE EVE OF THE INVASION . . .



DAWN BROKE THIN AND CLEAR OVER CRÈTE ON THE TWENTIETH DAY OF MAY 1941. OPERATION MERCURY BEGAN WITH A MASSED BOMBING ATTACK BY THE LUFTWAFFE.



THE SKY FILLED WITH THE ROAR OF ENGINES AND THE SHRILL WHINE OF FALLING BOMBS. THE GROUND SHOOK AND SHIVERED . . .



THE LAST OF THE HURRICANES TOOK TOLL OF THE HEAVY ENEMY BOMBERS . . . ONLY TO BE POUNCED UPON IN TURN BY THE PATROLLING MESSERSCHMITTS . . .



SWIFTLY THE ATTACK MOUNTED TO A PEAK OF SAVAGE FEROCITY.



SUDDENLY IT WAS OVER. THE BOMBERS WHEELED AND TURNED BACK. IN THE FIRST UNEASY SILENCE GARNETT FOUND SERGEANT BROGAN SQUATTING BESIDE HIM.

FEELIN' SCARED, POMMIE? AND DON'T TELL ME YOU AIN'T OR I'LL CALL YOU A LIAR!

WHY NOT? YOU'VE CALLED ME EVERYTHING ELSE, BROGAN!



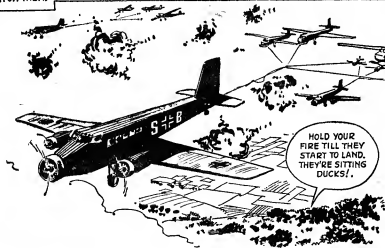
THE HARD-FACED SERGEANT'S TONE OF VOICE CHANGED ABRUPTLY THEN, AS IF HE WAS CALLING A TEMPORARY TRUCE TO THEIR PRIVATE FEUD.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

YOU OUGHT TO KNOW, SOLDIER... AIRBORNE SQUADS AND PARATROOPS. BETTER CHECK YOUR GUNS OVER. YOU ONLY GET ONE MISTAKE, WITH THOSE BOYS, **THE LAST!**



ONLY MINUTES LATER, THE ANZACS SAW THE STRINGS OF AIR-TOWED GLIDERS MOVING IN ON THEM.



## Against All Odds

AT A HUNDRED FEET THE GLIDERS DISENGAGED FROM EACH OTHER AND BEGAN TO SKID DOWN ... INTO A HOLOCAUST OF CONCENTRATED FIRE!



THE YOUNG WARRIORS OF HITLER'S BELOVED ASSAULT REGIMENT WERE DYING LIKE CATTLE IN A SLAUGHTER-PEN . . .





IN FIFTEEN MURDEROUS MINUTES, A BATTALION OF THE FINEST FIGHTING REGIMENT IN THE GERMAN ARMY HAD BEEN WIPED OUT. AND STILL THEIR BROTHERS FOLLOWED . . .



THE MORNING SKY BLOSSOMED WITH A THOUSAND PARACHUTES FALLING HELPLESSLY ON TO THE WAITING ANZAC GUNS.



TOWARDS NOON, THE ATTACK SLACKENED MOMENTARILY. GARNETT QUENCHED HIS THIRST AND COOLED THE HEATED BARREL OF HIS GUN.



YOU KNOW THE JERRIES, BROTHER. IF THEY WANT A THING BADLY ENOUGH . . . LIVES DON'T COUNT. THEY WANT CRETE LIKE A FOOTSLIGGER WANTS PAYDAY. THEY'LL BE BACK!

## Chapter 4. *The Supreme Sacrifice*

THE ATTACKS RENEUED WITH A VICIOUS INTENSITY. ALL THAT DAY AND THE NEXT THE ANZACS FOUGHT THEM OFF, HUNTING THEIR QUARRY DOWN LIKE GAME THROUGH THE OLIVE GROVES.



THEN, ON THE THIRD DAY, THE GERMANS GOT THE CHANCE FOR WHICH THEY HAD SACRIFICED SO MANY LIVES. A POCKET OF PARATROOPERS, FIGHTING LIKE FIENDS, REACHED THE MALEME AIRFIELD!

TELL 'EM  
WE HAVE REACHED  
MALEME. WE NEED MORTARS,  
AMMUNITION, MACHINE GUNS,  
FLAME-THROWERS!  
SCHNELL!



WITH INCREDIBLE EFFICIENCY, THE HUGE TRANSPORTS DROPPED GUNS AND SUPPLIES DOWN TO THEM. THEN MORE PARATROOPERS JOINED THEM, PROTECTED NOW BY A SCREEN OF MORTAR SHELLS AND MACHINE GUN FIRE.



BACKED BY SUPERIOR FIRE-POWER, THEY BEGAN TO INFILTRATE BEHIND THE ANZAC POSITIONS.



AS THEY RACED THROUGH THE TREES, BROGAN PULLED UP ABRUPTLY. THEY WERE CAUGHT IN A STEEL TRAP!



BROGAN SPOKE IN A TAUT, HARSH WHISPER . . .



TOMMY GUNS BLAZING FROM THE HIP, THE ANZACS HURLED THEMSELVES TOWARDS THE GUN. BEFORE THEY WERE HALFWAY IT'S DEVIL'S STACCATO THUNDERED INTO LIFE . . .



WITH LUNGS STRAINING FOR BREATH AND SWEAT STINGING THEIR EYES, BROGAN AND GARNETT REACHED THE MACHINE GUN TOGETHER.



BUT, IN THE CONFUSION OF BATTLE, BROGAN DID NOT HEAR THAT WARNING SHOUT. GARNETT MOVED QUICKLY . . .



A FEW SAVAGE MINUTES LATER AND THE FIGHT WAS OVER.

ONLY TWO OF US LEFT. WE'LL GRAB THIS GUN AND A COUPLE O' THEIR SCHMEISSERS. LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT OUR WAY OUT.

WHAT THE DEVIL'S HAPPENING? WHERE ARE THE REST OF OUR BOYS?



AS THEY SET OFF THROUGH THE OLIVE GROVE, BROGAN TURNED TO GARNETT. THERE WAS THE SAME COLD HATRED IN HIS VOICE . . . BUT ALSO A GRUDGING RESPECT.

NEVER THOUGHT I'D OWE MY LIFE TO A POMMIE SOLDIER. I HATE BEING IN DEBT.

THINK NOTHING OF IT, BROGAN. I'D HAVE DONE THE SAME FOR ANYONE!



AT LAST THEY CAME TO AN ABANDONED VILLAGE. FOR A TIME THEY WATCHED IT, WARY OF A TRAP.



AS THEY TRAVERSED THE STREET, A VOICE CALLED OUT HOARSELY. GARNETT STIFFENED AND NERVED HIMSELF FOR THE INEVITABLE BURST OF GUNFIRE.



A BUNCH OF IRON-FACED MEN APPEARED FROM A COTTAGE . . . AND WITH A WAVE OF RELIEF GARNETT RECOGNISED THEM AS FELLOW-FIGHTERS.



BUT ONCE THEY HAD PROVED THEIR IDENTITY, THE TWO ANZACS WERE TOLD THE SOMBRE NEWS.

THEY GOT MALEME AIRSTRIP, THEN THEY STARTED TO POUR IN MEN AND GUNS. THEY EVEN HAD FLAME-THROWERS. WE HEARD A RUMOUR THAT OUR BOYS ARE MOVING ACROSS TO THE COAST AT SPHAKIA FOR EVACUATION!

THAT CAN'T BE TRUE!



BROGAN HAD TAKEN COMMAND.

I'LL LAY YOU TEN TO ONE THE HEINIES PUT THAT ONE OUT. NOBODY'S EVACUATING! WE'RE GOING TO BREAK OUT OF HERE AND LINK UP WITH OUR LADS . . . WHEREVER THEY ARE!





LOOKING OUT ACROSS THE STREET GARNETT HAD A SUDDEN INSPIRATION.

WAIT, BROGAN!  
WHY DON'T WE PLAY  
THE JERRIES AT THEIR  
OWN GAME? THOSE  
DEAD PARATROOPERS  
OUT THERE... IF WE  
PUT THEIR RIG ON WE  
MIGHT BLUFF OUR  
WAY THROUGH. IT'S  
AN OUTSIDE  
CHANCE.

IT'S AN  
IDEA, POMMIE.  
LET'S TRY IT.



TEN MINUTES LATER, FEELING BULKY AND AWKWARD IN THE UNACCUSTOMED PARATROOP GEAR, THE LITTLE BODY OF ANZACS MOVED OUT INTO THE OPEN.

WE'LL HEAD FOR  
THE HILLS. AND I HOPE  
WE SEE OUR BOYS BEFORE  
THEY SEE US!

IT'S OUR ONLY  
CHANCE THIS WAY, SARGE.  
I'VE A FEELING THE JERRIES,  
ARE OVER-RUNNING  
THE ISLAND.



AFTER SEVERAL CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH GERMAN PARATROOP PATROLS, THEY PULLED UP AT NIGHTFALL. AHEAD OF THEM THEY HEARD THE ROAR OF REVVING TANK-ENGINES,



SCREENED BELOW THE TREES OF THE OLIVE GROVE, THEY FOUND THE GERMAN TANK PARK WITH ITS ATTENDANT CREWS, WORKING UNDER SHROUDED LIGHTS.



THE TWO MEN EXCHANGED GLANCES AND THE IDEA WAS BORN.

OKAY, POMMIE, IT'S AN IDEA.  
BUT WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST.  
DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT  
THAT GEAR? THERE WON'T  
BE TIME TO FUMBLE  
WITH IT.

WE  
CAPTURED  
ONE IN GREECE  
ONCE. THEY'RE  
SIMPLE  
ENOUGH.



WORKING TO A SWIFTLY CONCEIVED PLAN BROGAN MOVED OUT INTO THE OPEN. THE SENTRY'S CHALLENGE CAME LIKE THE BARK OF A MORTAR!

HALT!  
WHAT IS YOUR UNIT?  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DOING HERE?



GARNETT FELLED THE SENTRY SOUNDLESSLY AND THEN EASED ONE OF THE FLAME-THROWERS FROM THE HEAP. HE TESTED THE CONTROLS CAREFULLY, THEN ROSE TO HIS FEET.

THIS IS IT, SARGE.  
IF THAT TANKER GOES UP,  
IT'LL TAKE HALF THE TANKS  
WITH IT. THEY WON'T  
BE ABLE TO CONTROL  
IT.

GO AHEAD,  
POMMIE.  
WE'LL COVER  
YOU.



AS GARNETT PRESSED THE TRIGGER A PLUME OF FLAME SHAKED OUT, ENVELOPING THE GREAT TANKER IN ITS HOT BREATH. THERE WAS A PAUSE AND THEN . . .



THE FLAMES RAN ALONG THE GROUND, FOLLOWING THE TRACKS OF SPILLED PETROL, MOYING FROM TANK TO TANK.



THEN THEY WERE RUNNING FROM THE OLIVE GROVE WITH THE CRACKLING ROAR OF FLAMES BEHIND THEM AND THE SHOUTS OF FRIGHTENED MEN.



THE FIRST TANKER EXPLODED WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR . . . FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY THE SECOND. THE NIGHT SKY GLOWED WITH FLAME. BROGAN GRINNED AT GARNETT.

NICE WORK, POMMIE. AND YOU'LL NEVER KNOW HOW MUCH I HATE TO SAY THAT!

DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF, DIGGER. YOU MIGHT REGRET IT.



AND THEN MISFORTUNE STRUCK A CRUEL BLOW. A RANDOM BULLET FIRED SIGHTLESSLY IN THE NIGHT FOUND A BILLET. BROGAN STAGGERED AND NEARLY FELL.

BROGAN! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

I CAN TAKE IT, POMMIE. KEEP GOING!



BROGAN STAGGERED ON FOR A TIME BUT HE WAS BADLY HURT AND WEAKENING FAST. AT LAST HE PULLED UP . . .

IT'S NO GOOD, POMMIE. I'M SCUPPERED. SCRAM OUT OF IT AND LEAVE ME HERE.

THAT'S FOOL TALK! HERE, I'LL HELP YOU UP TO THAT COTTAGE AND WE'LL WORK SOMETHING OUT.



THEY PICKED THE SERGEANT UP AND TOOK HIM UP TO THE COTTAGE. THERE WAS A FLASH OF THE OLD ENMITY IN BROGAN'S VOICE . . .

LISTEN, POMMIE!  
THIS IS A WAR . . . NOT A  
SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC! YOUR  
JOB IS TO SAVE YOURSELF!  
THAT'S AN ORDER! NOW BEAT  
IT BEFORE I BOUNCE THIS  
GUN OFF YOUR SKULL!

OKAY, SOLDIER.  
WHO WANTS TO SAVE  
A BULL-HEADED MUTT  
ANYWAY?



GARNETT KNEW WHERE HIS DUTY LAY . . . TO ESCAPE TO FREEDOM AND CARRY ON THE FIGHT AGAINST THE INVADER. HE KNEW ALL THAT BUT THEN HE MADE HIS DECISION.

YOU BLOKES CARRY ON.  
I . . . I FORGOT SOMETHING.  
BEYOND THE HILL THERE'S  
A STREAM THAT'LL LEAD  
YOU TO THE COAST. I'LL  
SEE YOU LATER. . .



GARNETT SQUATTED DOWN  
BESIDE SERGEANT BROGAN.

GARNETT, YOU'RE  
A FOOL! A DURNED  
BRAINLESS IDIOT!  
JUST WHAT YOU'D EXPECT  
FROM A POMMIE! KNOW  
WHAT JERRY WILL DO  
TO US WHEN HE  
FINDS US?

BROGAN GRINNED WHEN GARNETT REPLIED . . .

NO, BUT I KNOW  
WHAT WE'LL DO TO  
JERRY. HOW ABOUT  
IT, BROGAN? OUR  
LAST FIGHT!

IT'S A DEAL,  
POMMIE. YOU'RE  
ALL RIGHT, I RECKON.  
TEN MORE YEARS DOWN  
UNDER WOULD HAVE  
MADE A MAN  
OF YOU.



THEY HAD TO GO BACK TO WAIT FOR THE ENEMY. PRESENTLY, GARNETT HEARD THE SLOW FOOTSTEPS OUTSIDE AND PEERED FROM THE WINDOW.



THE GERMAN PATROL LEADER SWUNG ROUND, GUN AT THE READY. HE RAPPED OUT AN ORDER.



AS THE DOOR CLATTERED INWARDS, GARNETT NODDED TO BROGAN AND THEIR GUNS CAME UP . . .

LOOKS LIKE  
THIS IS IT!  
YOU READY,  
COBBER?

I'M READY,  
POMMIE . . .  
LET 'EM  
HAVE IT!

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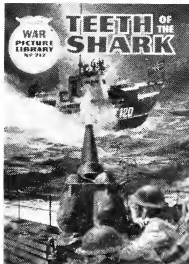
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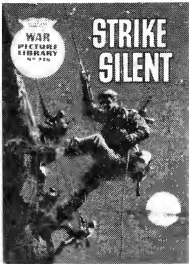
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